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Superior Court

## ***SUPERIOR COURT***

### ***ISSUES AND PRIORITIES***

#### ***Mission*** **Superior Court**

To serve the public by ensuring justice through accessible and effective forums for the fair, understandable, and timely resolution of legal matters.

The King County Superior Court (KCSC) is the county's general jurisdiction trial court with responsibility for civil cases, family law cases, felony cases and juvenile cases.

KCSC is the largest of the 29 superior court districts in Washington State and handles a caseload of more than 60,000 new cases each year. The court operates at four sites, including the King County Courthouse, Juvenile Court, and mental illness court at Harborview, and the Maleng Regional Justice Center in Kent. The court has

53 judges and 14 commissioners.

According to the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) filing data, total case filings in Superior Court have increased 5 percent between 2004 and 2009. However, the proportion of cases that make up the total has changed dramatically. During the same time period, criminal case filings have declined by 30 percent, while civil case filings have increased by 15 percent. All other case types including domestic, probate, adoption, mental illness and juvenile dependency have increased by 12 percent between 2005 and 2009. The large decrease in criminal filings reflects larger state and national downward trends in crime, which were compounded by the Prosecutor's change to the Filing and Disposition Standards in October 2008.

In 2009, the State Legislature enabled King County to supplant up to 50 percent of the revenues generated by the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) sales tax. The legislation ramps down the amount that can be supplanted by 10 percent per year over five years. The 2010 Executive Proposed Budget assumes that 30 percent of MIDD revenues in 2010 will be redirected to support existing mental health and chemical dependency programs. To reduce the burden on the General Fund, the Superior Court's budget for Adult Drug Court (ADC), Juvenile Drug Court (JDC) and Family Treatment Court (FTC) programs will be shifted onto the MIDD for at least the next three years.

## 2010 Proposed Budget for Superior Court 0010/0510

Code	Item	Description	Expenditures	FTEs *	TLTs
<b>Program Area</b>					
<b>LSJ</b>					
		2009 Adopted	42,919,304	383.00	0.00
		Status Quo**	(2,151,314)	(2.75)	0.00
		<b>Status Quo Budget</b>	<b>40,767,990</b>	<b>380.25</b>	<b>0.00</b>
		<b>Contra Add Back</b>	<b>3,571,884</b>		
<b>MIDD Supplantation</b>					
MI01		MIDD Supplantation of Adult Drug Diversion Court	(161,243)	(2.00)	0.00
MI02		MIDD Supplantation of Juvenile Drug Court	(32,369)	(0.40)	0.00
MI03		MIDD Supplantation of Family Treatment Court	(32,368)	(0.40)	0.00
			<b>(225,980)</b>	<b>(2.80)</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Operational Shutdown Savings</b>					
CR45		Operational Shutdown Savings Contra	(358,673)	0.00	0.00
			<b>(358,673)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Technical Adjustments</b>					
TA50		Revenue Adjustment of -\$382,621	0	0.00	0.00
CR01		Flexible Benefits	(181,608)	0.00	0.00
CR07		Technology Services Operations & Maintenance Charge	(24,349)	0.00	0.00
CR08		Technology Services Infrastructure Charge	(4,167)	0.00	0.00
CR09		Geographic Information Systems Charge	78	0.00	0.00
CR10		Office of Information Resource Mgmt Ops Charge/Rebate	(35,541)	0.00	0.00
CR11		Telecommunications Services	(3,377)	0.00	0.00
CR12		Telecommunications Overhead	(15,616)	0.00	0.00
CR13		Motor Pool Usage Charge	27,794	0.00	0.00
CR14		Facilities Management Space Charge	(290,399)	0.00	0.00
CR15		Insurance Charges	(1,872)	0.00	0.00
CR16		Radio Access	(175)	0.00	0.00
CR17		Radio Maintenance	119	0.00	0.00
CR18		Radio Direct Charges	115	0.00	0.00
CR22		Long Term Leases	55,259	0.00	0.00
CR25		Financial Services Charge	(28,461)	0.00	0.00
CR26		Retirement Rate Adjustment	(549,355)	0.00	0.00
CR27		Industrial Insurance Rate Adjustment	(3,498)	0.00	0.00
CR35		Underexpenditure Contra	22,741	0.00	0.00
CR36		Property Services Lease Administration Fee	1,490	0.00	0.00
CR37		Facilities Management Strategic Initiative	1,896	0.00	0.00
CR39		COLA Adjustment	(8,389)	0.00	0.00
CR40		Merit Adjustment	(7,125)	0.00	0.00
			<b>(1,044,440)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
		<b>Total Change Items in 2010</b>	<b>(1,629,093)</b>	<b>(2.80)</b>	<b>0.00</b>
		<b>2010 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>42,710,781</b>	<b>377.45</b>	<b>0.00</b>

\* FTEs do not include temporaries or overtime.

\*\* This includes 2009 adopted, initial status quo, and proposed status quo increments. Under FTEs, annualization is included.

\*\*\* Please see Budget Transparency Section table at the end of the program plan pages for section information as identified in the Budget Transparency Ordinance No. 16445.

Superior Court

## ***PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS***

The total 2010 Executive Proposed Budget for Superior Court is \$42,710,781 and 377.45 FTEs.

### **Operational Shutdown Savings**

**Operational Shutdown Savings – (\$358,673).** In the face of the severe fiscal challenges across all county funds, the 2010 Executive Proposed Budget includes savings assumptions in an effort to preserve direct services. For 2009, savings were achieved through the implementation of a ten-day building and/or operational closure program, resulting in labor furloughs. The 2010 budget is balanced across all funds assuming that a similar level of savings will be achieved in each agency based on the furlough eligible employees as was adopted for 2009, including 2009 County Council amendments. The specific details of the 2010 plan are still under development, and discussions with labor unions and individual agencies are on-going. Specific plans describing how the 2010 savings will be achieved will be transmitted to the County Council in the coming weeks. To the extent that savings, from labor or other expenses, cannot be fully achieved through temporary and short term building and/or operational closures, the plan will describe additional programmatic reductions and the elimination of additional positions.

### **MIDD Supplantation**

**MIDD Supplantation of Adult Drug Court – (\$161,243) / (2.00) FTEs.** This proposal shifts the Adult Drug Court judge and his bailiff from the General Fund to a MIDD appropriation unit. The expenditure and FTE authority for this program will now reside in the MIDD Fund.

**MIDD Supplantation of Juvenile Drug Court – (\$32,369) / (0.40) FTE.** This proposal shifts 0.2 Juvenile Drug Court judge and 0.2 bailiff from the General Fund to a MIDD appropriation unit. The expenditure and FTE authority for this program will now reside in the MIDD Fund.

**MIDD Supplantation of Family Treatment Court – (\$32,368) / (0.40) FTE.** This proposal shifts 0.2 Family Treatment Court judge and 0.2 bailiff from the General Fund to a MIDD appropriation unit. The expenditure and FTE authority for this program will now reside in the MIDD Fund.

### **Technical Adjustments**

**Central Rates – (\$1,044,440).** This series of adjustments captures the net effect of countywide charges and results in a \$1,044,440 reduction in charges to Superior Court. These reductions reflect efficiencies created by Executive agencies to reduce the cost of services they provide to other county agencies. These changes reflect the County Executive's commitment to creating an efficient government and making administrative reductions before direct service reductions. The efforts of central rate agencies to reduce costs are integral to the County Executive's strategy to address the General Fund deficit, and benefit all county agencies.

### **IT Capital Projects**

This IT project is budgeted separately in Capital Fund 3771 and is included here to provide a full representation of budget changes related to Superior Court.

**IT Equipment Replacement – \$80,200.** This proposal will allow Superior Court to replace IT equipment at end-of-life and as warranties expire. This proposal was based on an Equipment Replacement Plan that was developed to support the court's core services and performance measures at the current level. Not providing these services would mean that court staff would not be as productive due to slower systems and more breakdowns.